

Message Text

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47

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 SCEM-02 INT-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01

COME-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 DRC-01 SCI-06 NEA-10 AF-10 /147 W

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P 171430Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5865

INFO AMCONSUL BELIZE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT OF SPAIN 1641

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, TD, XL

SUBJECT: CARICOM LEADERS TO MEET IN TRINIDAD ON OIL CRISIS

REF: POS 1628; POS 1605; AND PREVIOUS

1. ACCORDING TO PRESS, MANLEY AND BURNHAM, TOGETHER WITH BARBADOS' MINISTER OF INDUSTRY TAITT, ARE COMING TO TRINIDAD TUESDAY DECEMBER 18 TO MEET WITH GOTT OFFICIALS ABOUT REGIONAL OIL SUPPLY SITUATION. A GROUP OF JAMAICAN OFFICIALS ARE ALSO REPORTED IN TRINIDAD NOW, DISCUSSING THAT COUNTRY'S NEED FOR PETROLEUM. ALTHOUGH TEXACO HAS BEEN ORDERED BY GOTT TO MAINTAIN NORMAL LEVEL OF PETROLEUM SUPPLIES TO ALL CARICOM/CARIFTA COUNTRIES, CUTBACKS IN SUPPLIES BY OTHER TRADITIONAL SUPPLIERS HAVE RESULTED IN RATIONING IN MONTSERRAT AND ANGUILLA, AND LED TO SERIOUS PROSPECTIVE SHORTAGES IN OTHER ISLANDS. MONTSERRAT'S FORMER PREMIER BRAMBLE PUBLICLY CRITICIZED THE GOTT FOR FAILING TO TAKE ANY MEASURES TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH ITS MAINTENANCE-OF-SUPPLY DIRECTIVE TO TEXACO, AND SAID THAT MONTSERRAT SHOULD

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WITHDRAW FROM CARICOM IF TRINIDAD IS UNABLE TO PROVIDE PT WITH

FUEL. (BRAMBLE HAD EARLIER URGED THAT THE GOTT NATIONALIZE ALL REFINERIES IN TRINIDAD.) BOTH OIL INDUSTRY AND GOTT OFFICIALS HAVE CONFIRMED THAT MEETINGS WERE HELD BETWEEN GOTT AND SHELL AND TEXACO ON DECEMBER 14 (POS 1628), BUT DETAILS OF WHAT TRANSPIRED ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE (AND PROBABLY NEVER WILL BE MADE PUBLIC).

2. FYI ONLY: EMBASSY HAS BEEN INFORMED--AND TEXACO RELUCTANTLY CONFIRMED--THAT THROUGHPUT IN ITS MAJOR REFINERY HAS DROPPED TO ABOUT 250,000 BBL PER DAY, DUE TO REDUCTIONS BY ARAB SUPPLY SOURCES. (TEXACO IS NOW RECEIVING ONLY ABOUT 200,000 BBL OF FOREIGN CRUDE PER DAY.) TEXACO OFFICIAL ALSO TOLD EMBASSY THAT GOTT HAS MADE CONTACT WITH SAUDIS TO REQUEST ADDITIONAL CRUDE AGAINST GOTT GUARANTEE THAT NONE WILL FIND WAY INTO US MARKET. ACTING GENERAL MANAGER OF AMOCO TRINIDAD STATED THAT GOTT HAS NOT RAISED OR EVEN HINTED AT POSSIBILITY THAT SOME OF AMOCO'S CURRENT CRUDE PRODUCTION OF 70,000 BBL PER DAY COULD BE DIVERTED TO LOCAL REFINERIES. HE ADDUCED VARIETY OF REASONS--CONTRACTUAL, FINANCIAL, TECHNICAL--WHY AMOCO COULD NOT COMPLY WITH SUCH A REQUEST, BUT POSSIBILITY REMAINS VERY MUCH ON MINDS OF OIL COMPANY OFFICIALS HERE. (MEANWHILE, AMOCO'S FURTHER EXPANSION HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY HAMPERED BY A RECENT DRILLING BARGE EXPLOSION THAT WILL REQUIRE FOUR MONTHS' REPAIR.) END FYI ONLY.

3. TRINIDAD ITSELF IS STILL UNAFFECTED BY OIL CRISIS, BUT BEGINNING TO REALIZE THAT IT CANNOT ESCAPE WORLDWIDE RAMIFICATIONS. PRESS HEADLINED DIFFICULTIES FACED BY HOTELS AND TOUR OPERATORS IN BRINGING TOURISTS IN ON CHARTER FLIGHTS AND CRUISE SHIPS FOR THE FEBRUARY 25-26 CARNIVAL SEASON, AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN TRINIDAD'S TOURISM RECEIPTS.

4. ALTHOUGH MAJOR AIRLINES OPERATING AT TRINIDAD'S PIARCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT HAVE NOT EXPERIENCED SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN OBTAINING JET FUEL, APPARENTLY BWIA HAS HAD OR EXPECTS PROBLEMS IN NEW YORK, AND THE GOTT ASKED TEXACO UNSUCCESSFULLY TO GUARANTEE BWIA SUPPLIES IN NEW YORK.

5. THE ONE CHAIN OF GAS STATIONS AUTHORIZED TO CLOSE ON SUNDAYS (POS 1605) LARGELY STAYED OPEN, BUT GAS STATION OPERATORS ARE PLANNING TO CLOSE ON SUNDAYS BEGINNING IN
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JANUARY, ONCE AGREEMENT IS OBTAINED FOR ALL TO ACT SIMULTANEOUSLY.
MARSHALL

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 17 DEC 1973
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